

Harry Potter, Deathly Hallows or Horcruxs

by Chipmander

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Summary: A retelling of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. The Gabrielle Delacour Harry saved during the second task is the same age as Harry. And a reconnection at Bill and Fleur's wedding sets events on a slightly different path.

1. Prologue

A whole crowd of merpeople was floating in front of the houses that lined what looked like a mer-version of a village square. A choir of merpeople was singing in the middle, calling the champions toward them, and behind them rose a crude sort of statue; a gigantic merperson hewn from a boulder. Four people were bound tightly to the tail of the stone merperson. Ron was tied between Hermione and Cho Chang. There was also a beautiful girl who looked my own age, whose clouds of silvery hair made me feel sure that she was Fleur Delacour's sister. All four of them appeared to be in a very deep sleep. Their heads were lolling onto their shoulders, and fine streams of bubbles kept issuing from their mouths.

I sped toward the hostages, half expecting the merpeople to lower their spears and charge, but they did nothing. The ropes of weed tying the hostages to the statue were thick, slimy, and very strong. For a fleeting second I thought of the knife Sirius had bought me for Christmas-locked in my trunk in the castle a quarter of a mile away, no use to me whatsoever. I looked around. Many of the merpeople surrounding me were carrying spears. I swam swiftly toward a seven-foot-tall merman with a long green beard and a choker of shark fangs and tried to mime a request to borrow the spear. The merman laughed and shook his head. "We do not help," he said in a harsh, croaky voice.

"Come ON!" I said fiercely (but only bubbles issued from my mouth). I tried to pull the spear away from the merman, but the merman yanked it back, still shaking his head and laughing. I swirled around,

staring about. Something sharp... Anything... There were rocks littering the lake bottom. I dived and snatched up a particularly jagged one and returned to the statue. I began to hack at the ropes binding Ron, and after several minutes' hard work, they broke apart. Ron floated, unconscious, a few inches above the lake bottom, drifting a little in the ebb of the water.

I looked around. There was no sign of any of the other champions. What were they playing at? Why didn't they hurry up? I turned back to Hermione, raised the jagged rock, and began to hack at her bindings too-At once, several pairs of strong gray hands seized me. Half a dozen mermen were pulling me away from Hermione, shaking their green-haired heads, and laughing. "You take your own hostage," one of them said to me. "Leave the others ..."

"No way!" I said furiously-but only two large bubbles came out.

"Your task is to retrieve your own friend... Leave the others ..."

"She's my friend too!" I yelled, gesturing toward Hermione, an enormous silver bubble emerging soundlessly from my lips. "And I don't want them to die either!" Cho's head was on Hermione's shoulder; the silver-haired girl was ghostly green and pale. I struggled to fight off the mermen, but they laughed harder than ever, holding me back. I looked wildly around. Where were the other champions? Would I have time to take Ron to the surface and come back down for Hermione and the others? Would I be able to find them again? I looked down at my watch to see how much time was left-it had stopped working. But then the merpeople around me pointed excitedly over my head. Harry looked up and saw Cedric swimming toward the hostages. There was an enormous bubble around his head, which made his features look oddly wide and stretched.

"Got lost!" he mouthed, looking panic-stricken. "Fleur and Krum're coming now!" Feeling enormously relieved, I watched Cedric pull a knife out of his pocket and cut Cho free. He pulled her upward and out of sight.

I looked around, waiting. Where were Fleur and Krum? Time was getting short, and according to the song, the hostages would be lost after an hour... The merpeople started screeching animatedly. Those holding me loosened their grip, staring behind them. I turned and saw something monstrous cutting through the water toward them: a human body in swimming trunks with the head of a shark... It was Krum. He appeared to have transfigured himself but badly. The shark-man swam straight to Hermione and began snapping and biting at her ropes; the trouble was that Krum's new teeth were positioned very awkwardly for biting anything smaller than a dolphin, and I was quite sure that if Krum wasn't careful, he was going to rip Hermione in half. Darting forward I hit Krum hard on the shoulder and held up the jagged stone. Krum seized it and began to cut Hermione free. Within seconds, he had done it; he grabbed Hermione around the waist, and without a backward glance, began to rise rapidly with her toward the surface.

Now what? I thought desperately. If I could be sure that Fleur was coming... But still no sign. There was nothing to be done except... I snatched up the stone, which Krum had dropped, but the mermen now closed in around Ron and the pretty silver-haired girl, shaking their

heads at me. I pulled out my wand. "Get out of the way!" Only bubbles flew out of my mouth, but I had the distinct impression that the mermen had understood me, because they suddenly stopped laughing. Their yellowish eyes were fixed upon my wand, and they looked scared. There might be a lot more of them than there were of me, but I could tell, by the looks on their faces, that they knew no more magic than the giant squid did. "You've got until three!" I shouted; a great stream of bubbles burst from me, but I held up three fingers to make sure they got the message. "One..." (I put down a finger) "two..." (I put down a second one)-They scattered.

I darted forward and began to hack at the ropes binding the beautiful girl to the statue, and at last she was free. I seized the girl around the waist, grabbed the neck of Ron's robes, and kicked off from the bottom. It was very slow work. I could no longer use my webbed hands to propel myself forward; I worked my flippers furiously, but Ron and Fleur's sister were like potato-filled sacks dragging me back down... I fixed my eyes skyward, though I knew I must still be very deep, the water above me was so dark ... Merpeople were rising with me. I could see them swirling around me with ease, watching me struggle through the water... Would they pull me back down to the depths when the time was up? Did they perhaps eat humans? My legs were seizing up with the effort to keep swimming; my shoulders were aching horribly with the effort of dragging Ron and the girl... I was drawing breath with extreme difficulty. I could feel pain on the sides of my neck again ... I was becoming very aware of how wet the water was in my mouth... Yet the darkness was definitely thinning now... I could see daylight above me... I kicked hard with my flippers and discovered that they were nothing more than feet... Water was flooding through my mouth into my lungs ... I was starting to feel dizzy, but I knew light and air were only ten feet above me ... I had to get there ... I had to ... I kicked my legs so hard and fast it felt as though my muscles were screaming in protest; my very brain felt waterlogged, I couldn't breathe, I needed oxygen, I had to keep going, I could not stop-And then I felt my head break the surface of the lake; wonderful, cold, clear air was making my wet face sting; I gulped it down, feeling as though I had never breathed properly before, and, panting, pulled Ron and the girl up with me.

All around me, wild, green-haired heads were emerging out of the water with me, but they were smiling at me. The crowd in the stands was making a great deal of noise; shouting and screaming, they all seemed to be on their feet; I had the impression they thought that Ron and the girl might be dead, but they were wrong... Both of them had opened their eyes; the girl looked scared and confused, but Ron merely expelled a great spout of water, blinked in the bright light, turned to Harry, and said, "Wet, this, isn't it?" Then he spotted Fleur's sister. "What did you bring her for?"

"Fleur didn't turn up, I couldn't leave her," I panted.

"Harry, you prat, " said Ron, "you didn't take that song thing seriously, did you? Dumbledore wouldn't have let any of us drown!"

"The song said-"

"It was only to make sure you got back inside the time limit!" said Ron. "I hope you didn't waste time down there acting the hero!"

I felt both stupid and annoyed. It was all very well for Ron; he'd been asleep, he hadn't felt how eerie it was down in the lake, surrounded by spear-carrying merpeople who'd looked more than capable of murder. "C'mon," I said shortly.

Fleur's sister still looked confused so I pulled her through the water, back toward the bank where the judges stood watching, twenty merpeople accompanying us like a guard of honor, singing their horrible screechy songs.

I could see Madam Pomfrey fussing over Hermione, Krum, Cedric, and Cho, all of whom were wrapped in thick blankets. Dumbledore and Ludo Bagman stood beaming at me from the bank as we swam nearer, but Percy, who looked very white and somehow much younger than usual, came splashing out to meet Ron.

Meanwhile Madame Maxime was trying to restrain Fleur Delacour, who was quite hysterical, fighting tooth and nail to return to the water. "Gabrielle! Gabrielle! Is she alive? Is she 'urt?"

"She's fine!" I tried to tell her, but I was so exhausted I could hardly talk, let alone shout.

Percy seized Ron and was dragging him back to the bank ("Gerroff, Percy, I'm all right!"); Dumbledore and Bagman were pulling me upright; Fleur had broken free of Madame Maxime and was hugging her sister. "It was ze grindylows... Zey attacked me ... Oh Gabrielle, I thought... I thought..."

"Come here, you, " said Madam Pomfrey. She seized me and pulled me over to Hermione and the others, wrapped me so tightly in a blanket that I felt as though I were in a straitjacket, and forced a measure of very hot potion down my throat. Steam gushed out of my ears.

"Harry, well done!" Hermione cried. "You did it, you found out how all by yourself!"

"Well—" I said. I would have told her about Dobby, but I had just noticed Karkaroff watching me. He was the only judge who had not left the table; the only judge not showing signs of pleasure and relief that Ron, Fleur's sister and I had got back safely. "Yeah, that's right," I said, raising my voice slightly so that Karkaroff could hear me.

"You haff a water beetle in your hair, Herm-own-ninny, " said Krum. I had the impression that Krum was drawing her attention back onto himself; perhaps to remind her that he had just rescued her from the lake, but Hermione brushed away the beetle impatiently and said, "You're well outside the time limit, though, Harry... Did it take you ages to find us?"

"No ... I found you okay... " my feeling of stupidity was growing. Now I was out of the water, it seemed perfectly clear that Dumbledore's safety precautions wouldn't have permitted the death of a hostage just because their champion hadn't turned up. Why hadn't I just grabbed Ron and gone? I would have been first back... Cedric and Krum hadn't wasted time worrying about anyone else; they hadn't taken the mersong seriously..."

Dumbledore was crouching at the water's edge, deep in conversation with what seemed to be the chief merperson, a particularly wild and ferocious-looking female. He was making the same sort of screechy noises that the merpeople made when they were above water; clearly, Dumbledore could speak Mermish. Finally he straightened up, turned to his fellow judges, and said, "A conference before we give the marks, I think." The judges went into a huddle.

Madam Pomfrey had gone to rescue Ron from Percy's clutches; she led him over to me and the others, gave him a blanket and some Pepperup Potion, then went to fetch Fleur and her sister. Fleur had many cuts on her face and arms and her robes were torn, but she didn't seem to care, nor would she allow Madam Pomfrey to clean them. "Look after Gabrielle," she told her, and then she turned to me. "You saved 'er," she said breathlessly. "Even though she was not your 'ostage."

"Yeah," I said, I was now heartily wishing I'd left all three girls tied to the statue. Fleur bent down, kissed me twice on each cheek (I felt his face burn and wouldn't have been surprised if steam was coming out of my ears again.)

Just then, Ludo Bagman's magically magnified voice boomed out beside us, making us all jump, and causing the crowd in the stands to go very quiet. "Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached our decision. Merchieftainess Murcus has told us exactly what happened at the bottom of the lake, and we have therefore decided to award marks out of fifty for each of the champions, as follows... Fleur Delacour, though she demonstrated excellent use of the Bubble-Head Charm, was attacked by grindylows as she approached her goal, and failed to retrieve her hostage. We award her twenty-five points. "Applause came from the stands.

"I deserved zero," said Fleur throatily, shaking her magnificent head.

"Cedric Diggory, who also used the Bubble-Head Charm, was first to return with his hostage, though he returned one minute outside the time limit of an hour." Enormous cheers from the Hufflepuffs in the crowd; I saw Cho give Cedric a glowing look. "We therefore award him forty-seven points." My heart sank. If Cedric had been outside the time limit, he most certainly had been. "Viktor Krum used an incomplete form of Transfiguration, which was nevertheless effective, and was second to return with his hostage. We award him forty points. "Karkaroff clapped particularly hard, looking very superior. "Harry Potter used gillyweed to great effect," Bagman continued. "He returned last, and well outside the time limit of an hour. However, the Merchieftainess informs us that Mr. Potter was first to reach the hostages, and that the delay in his return was due to his determination to return all hostages to safety, not merely his own." Ron and Hermione both gave me half-exasperated, half-commiserating looks. "Most of the judges," and here, Bagman gave Karkaroff a very nasty look, "feel that this shows moral fiber and merits full marks. However...Mr. Potter's score is forty-five points."

My stomach leapt—I was now tying for first place with Cedric. Ron and Hermione, caught by surprise, stared at me, then laughed and started applauding hard with the rest of the crowd. "There you go. Harry!" Ron shouted over the noise. "You weren't being thick after all—you

were showing moral fiber!" Fleur was clapping very hard too, but Krum didn't look happy at all. He attempted to engage Hermione in conversation again, but she was too busy cheering me to listen.

"The third and final task will take place at dusk on the twenty-fourth of June," continued Bagman. "The champions will be notified of what is coming precisely one month beforehand. Thank you all for your support of the champions."

It was over. I thought dazedly, as Madam Pomfrey began herding the champions and hostages back to the castle to get into dry clothes ... It was over, I had got through ... I didn't have to worry about anything now until June the twenty-fourth... Next time I was in Hogsmeade, I decided as I walked back up the stone steps into the castle, I was going to buy Dobby a pair of socks for every day of the year.

2. Chapter 1

"Okay everyone, you all look good enough." called Mrs. Weasley. "Everyone head to the back yard so we are ready to greet the Delacours when they arrive."

I had never seen the burrow so clean before. Everyone had worked hard to make sure the house was more than presentable for Bill and Fleur's wedding. Mr. Weasley was awaiting the Delacours at the top of the hill which was serving as the port-key and apparition point for all visitors coming to the wedding.

The first sound of their approach was an unusually high-pitched laugh, which turned out to be coming from Mr. Weasley, who appeared at the gate moments later, laden with luggage and leading a beautiful blonde woman in long, leaf-green robes, who could only be Fleur's mother. "Maman!" cried Fleur, rushing forward to embrace her. "Papa!" Monsieur Delacour was nowhere near as attractive as his wife; he was a head shorter and extremely plump, with a little, pointed black beard. However, he looked good-natured. Bouncing toward Mrs. Weasley on high-heeled boots, he kissed her twice on each cheek, leaving her flustered.

"You 'ave been to much trouble," he said in a deep voice. "Fleur tells us you 'ave been working very 'ard. ""

"Oh, it's been nothing, nothing," trilled Mrs. Weasley. "No trouble at all." Ron relieved his feelings by aiming a kick at a gnome who was peering out
>from behind one of the new bushes.<p>

"Dear lady!" said Monsieur Delacour, still holding Mrs. Weasley's hand between his two plump ones and beaming. "We are most honored at the approaching union of our two families! Let me present my wife, Apolline." Madame Delacour glided forward and stooped to kiss Mrs. Weasley too.

"Enchantee," she said. "Your 'usband 'as been telling us such amusing stories!" Mr. Weasley gave a maniacal laugh; Mrs. Weasley threw him a look, upon which he became immediately silent and assumed an expression appropriate to the sickbed of a close friend.

"And, of course, you 'ave met my leetle daughter, Gabrielle!" said Monsieur Delacour. Gabrielle was Fleur as I remembered from two years prior. With waist length hair of pure, silvery blonde, she gave Mrs. Weasley a dazzling smile and hugged her, then threw me a glowing look, batting her eyelashes. Ginny cleared her throat loudly.

At this point Mrs. Weasley welcomed them in and the crowd made their way inside the Weasley's home. I turned to Ron and said "I can't believe how attractive Gabrielle is."

"Maybe she has a thing for redheads like her sister." Ron smirked at me but it didn't last long as Hermione elbowed him in the side.

"Do you have a thing for redheads Harry?" Ginny piped up, catching me completely off guard.

"I like red but I believe people can be attractive with any color of hair." That may not have been the answer she was looking for as she stalked away to her room with Hermione.

"Hello Harry," Gabrielle said following Ron and I up the stairs toward Ron's room.

"Don't you mean 'ello 'arry," Ron said chuckling to himself.

"No, I mean Hello Harry. I have been taught the last two years how to speak English correctly." replied Gabrielle unfazed by Ron's comment.

"What Ron meant to say was hello Gabrielle. How are you doing?" I said trying to move the conversation away from Ron and his bad manners.

"I'm doing great and you can call me Gabby. That's what my friends call me. I'm excited for the wedding. I have really missed Fleur and I wanted an opportunity to thank you for saving me during the second task of the Triwizard Tournament. I was a little out of it and wasn't able to thank you properly." Gabby was smiling her dazzling smile.

"It was nothing really. There was no way the Headmasters would have allowed any danger to come to the hostages. It was pretty stupid of me to think that I needed to try and save everyone." I was still embarrassed thinking back at how I risked so much to try and save people who didn't need saving.

"So you didn't save me because you think I'm pretty." Gabby smirked, way cuter than should be possible.

"That probably helped convince me to save you but I probably would have done saved you regardless of how attractive you are." I'm sure my cheeks were turning red with how embarrassed I felt being put on the spot like that.

"Well I did want to thank you." and Gabby leaned over to give me a quick kiss on the lips.

Ron and I were dumbstruck. Ron was the first to snap out of it. "Hey, what was that for! Harry is dating my sister!"

"We broke up Ron." I said the same time Gabby said "There is nothing wrong with a small kiss to show my appreciation."

"Well, I thought you wanted to see Fleur. Why are you up here trying to cause problems?" Ron questioned Gabby.

"I do want to spend time with Fleur. I figured my parents would want to catch up with her first so I decided to thank Harry before I go and steal my sister for myself." Gabby looked like she would keep smiling no matter what Ron said to her. "I think I'm going to go steal her away now. Catch you later Harry." Gabby gave a small wave and if I'm not mistaken she winked at me as she turned to head out of Ron's room.

"That was interesting." I said as Ron went and closed the door.

"If Ginny saw that, Gabrielle would have a serious case of bat-bogey right now." Ron was shaking his head.

"It is probably for the best that she and Hermione went to her room." I nodded in agreement.

The rest of the day passed as everyone worked on one chore after another. The Delacours were a great help doing whatever they could to help get the Burrow ready in time for the wedding. Mrs. Weasley seemed to follow Hermione, Ron and I wherever we went. She knew we were up to something and she wouldn't allow us any time to try and plan our secret upcoming trip.

Gabby followed Fleur around and they spoke together in rapid French that I had no hope in trying to understand. My eyes couldn't help but drift toward Gabby as she worked around the house. She seemed quite adept at cleaning charms. And judging by the way she was casting spells left and right she must have already come of age.

"Wake up Harry. It's your birthday." Ron shouted at me the next morning. "Open my present before we head downstairs so the others don't see."

Ron had gotten me a book with advice on how to charm witches. He highly recommended it, and considering it was a book coming from Ron, it must be worth my time to give it a look over.

As we went downstairs for breakfast there was a pile of presents waiting for me. Mr. And Mrs. Weasley had gotten me a watch similar to the one they had gotten for Ron. Mrs. Weasley said it was appropriate for a wizard to get a watch when he comes of age. I gave Mrs. Weasley a huge hug to show my appreciation for everything she had done for me over the years. She had taken me and treated me like another son. I could never be grateful enough for that hospitality and care.

It was a very nice haul of presents as Hermione gave me a sneakoscope, Bill and Fleur gave me a razor, Fred and George gave me a large package of their latest supplies and the Delacours gave me some chocolates. It was kind of everyone to take the time and think of me on my birthday, with Bill and Fleur's wedding being on the horizon.

Hermione grabbed my presents and got up to go pack them away. Ron and I stood up to go and follow her when Gabby reached out and grabbed my

hand. "Come with me Harry, I have a present for you as well."

Gabby led me up the staircase toward what was Percy's old room. Fleur and Gabby had slept there last night. As we passed, the door to Ginny's room opened and Ginny called out "Harry, will you come in here a moment?"

"Can I come back in a minute? Gabby said she had a present to give me first." I said as I passed up the stairs. Gabby never slowed down nor released my hand from her grip.

"Oh, well, never mind then. It can wait." Ginny went back into her room but I didn't miss the look of disappointment that crossed her face.

As Gabby and I entered Percy's old room I took a moment to look around. I had never been in her before and it wasn't what I expected. Fleur had changed the room into a very girly room. The purple walls and little porcelain figurines scattered around the dressers and bookcases were not what I expected to find in Percy's room. Or at least I hoped not to find in his room. The room looked magically expanded in order to fit the second bed for Gabby.

I turned to Gabby, "You really didn't need to get me anything. You are only here for Fleur's wedding, not for my birthday."

"But there is something I want to give you. I figured I wouldn't get to see you much during my stay in England and I wanted to give you something to remember me by." She took a step closer to me. I was getting lost in her crystal blue eyes.

"I'm pretty sure I could never forget you Gabby. You are pretty memorable."

Before I knew it Gabby was kissing me. And this kiss wasn't like the kiss from earlier, it wasn't like any kiss I had ever had before. It was blissful oblivion, better than firewhisky; she was the only real thing in the world, the feel of her, one hand at her back and one in her long, sweet-smelling hair. â€"

The door burst open and I jumped away from Gabby. "What are you doing in here Harry?" It was Ron.

"I was getting a present from Gabby." I responded very intelligently.

"So you can't date Ginny because it is too dangerous and the trip we are going on but you will go snogging that Veela the same house?" Ron looked fuming.

I felt like I was hit with a confundus charm and didn't know what to say. Luckily Hermione came to my rescue. "Ron, you don't know exactly what you saw. It was probably all innocent."

"No it wasn't, and that was the second time in two days she has kissed him!" Ron was fuming. "You ditched her and what you're doing now is going to mess her up if she finds out."

"It won't happen again." I said harshly. "Let's take this outside so the whole house doesn't hear us okay?"

Outside, Ron was finally able to calm down and everyone went about the rest of the day as if nothing had happened. Gabby acted like she hadn't done anything more than have a casual conversation with me. I had a hard time trying to avoid glancing at the stunning silver-haired blonde wearing a yellow summer dress for the rest of the day. When we caught each other's eyes we would share a quick smile before moving along.

Charlie showed up and proved a great distraction for the whole Weasley clan. By seven o'clock the dinner party was ready outside by the garden. The guests had arrived and Mrs. Weasley had prepared a wonderful cake that resembled a giant snitch.

Too bad dinner was interrupted by the Minister of Magic. Rufus Scrimgeour was a surly old man and he made handing out the items in Dumbledore's Will very awkward.

3. Chapter 2

I found myself the next morning dressed in dress robes and very uncomfortable; because I had taken a polyjuice potion containing the hair of a local, red headed muggle boy from the nearby town. He was bigger around the chest and middle; and made dress robes a bigger inconvenience than they already were. As part of the disguise I took the identity of a cousin to the Weasleys named Barney for the wedding; and I was helping Ron and his brothers usher guests to their seats.

I ran into some interesting guests. Somehow Luna's father was stranger than she was. Luna was able to know I was Harry Potter despite the polyjuice potion. She has a very unique way of seeing the world. Some of Ron's older relatives are very strange and it was fun to watch Ron and Hermione interact when Viktor Krum showed up.

We found our seats just before the wedding began. Fleur seemed to be emitting a strong, silvery glow that beautified everyone around. Ginny and Gabby, both wearing golden dresses, looked even prettier than usual. Ginny's Aunt Muriel thought the dresses were a little too low cut but I didn't mind. In fact, I may have lost track of the wedding staring at them because before I knew it I was asked to rise and congratulate the new bride and groom. The tent was transformed into a dance floor with tables all around.

Ron led Hermione and I to a table Luna Lovegood was sitting by herself at. We weren't there for long before Luna got up to go dance and twirl around by herself.

"She is great, isn't she?" said Ron admiringly. "Always good value." His good mood quickly dropped though when Viktor Krum came and sat down at an empty chair.

Krum scowled, "Who is that man in the yellow?"

"That's Xenophilius Lovegood, he is the father of a friend of ours." said Ron indicating that they weren't going to laugh at the odd man. Ron stood up and reached out for Hermione, "Come and dance." Hermione looked pleased and together they went and vanished on the dance floor.

"Are they together now?" asked a distracted Krum.

I shrugged, "sort of."

"Who are you?" Krum asked. Before I could answer Gabby walked up and sat down beside me.

"Barney Weasley." I said. I reached out and Krum and I shook hands.

"And who are you? I assume you are Fleur's sister." Krum nodded to Gabby. I didn't like the way he was looking her up and down.

"Gabrielle Delacour, pleased to make your acquaintance Viktor. My sister speaks well of you." Gabby said graciously. I reached out and grabbed Gabby's hand trying to dissuade Krum from attempting to make an advance on her.

Krum may have twitched by my gesture but he resumed the topic he was on earlier. "You, Barney, you know this man Lovegood vell?"

"No, I only met him today. Why?"

Krum glowered over the top of his drink, watching Xenophilius, who was chatting to several warlocks on the other side of the dance floor. "Because," said Krum, "if he was not a guest of Fleur's, I would duel him here and now, for vearing that filthy sign upon his chest."

"Sign?" I said, looking at Xenophilius too. A strange triangular eye was gleaming on his chest. "Why? What's wrong with it?"

"Grindelwald. That is Grindelwald's sign."

"Grindelwald . . . the Dark wizard Dumbledore defeated?" I asked.

"Exactly." Krum finished.

"I'm sure he means nothing by it. He probably thinks it could help him find some imaginary creature. He is just a kind old man who is a little off his rocker." I said trying to get Krum from shooting death glares toward Luna's father.

I turned to Gabby, "Did you offer Fleur and Bill your congratulations?"

"I did before I came and sat down next to you." Gabby has a huge smile on her face. It is easy to see how happy she is for her sister.

"This girl is very nice-looking," Krum said, recalling me to my surroundings. Krum was pointing at Ginny, who had just joined Luna. "She is also a relative of yours?"

"Yeah," I said, suddenly irritated, "and she's seeing someone. Jealous type. Big bloke. You wouldn't want to cross him."

Krum grunted.

Gabby removed her hand from my grasp. "Really? I was told they recently broken up." Gabby said, "I was told she was single."

"Nope, she is definitely taken." I said glaring at Gabby.

"If she is taken, maybe I am free." Gabby shot back at me.

"You are with me and she is with Harry Potter." I said as I reached out to hold her hand once more.

"It appears you Delacour women like red headed boys. Vot," Krum said, draining his goblet and getting to his feet again, "is the point of being an international Quidditch player if all the good-looking girls are taken?"

"If you are with me, then perhaps you would join me on the dance floor." Gabby said and stood, and I couldn't help but follow.

There was floating bottles of champagne all throughout the crowd. The canopy of the tent was lit with floating golden lanterns. The revelry of the party was getting more and more uncontained.

I don't know how long I danced with Gabby but something about her was glowing and I felt a magnetized pull toward her. I just wanted to be near her.

"I have to admit Harry," Gabby started talking after what must have been an hour of dancing, "I really like you. Everyone grows up hearing stories about the Boy-Who-Lived, who brought down He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. But then you turned out to be my personal savior too." Gabby looked down clearly embarrassed.

"It was really nothing Gabby. And the rest are just stories." I tried to explain.

"I know they are stories, but I would like to get to know the real you." Gabby took a second to think of what she wanted to say. "I really do, but you seem hung up on Ginny still."

"To be honest, we are separated not because of a failed romance but because I feel she is safer if we keep our distance until Lord Voldemort is destroyed." Gabby shivered as I said the name out loud. "And I should give you the same advice."

At that moment Hermione came up and grabbed my shoulder. She was leading Ron along behind her. "My feet can't dance anymore. Let's go find a table and sit down for a while."

I followed Ron and Hermione to an empty table clutching Gabby's hand the whole time.

"Ginny has been shooting you two daggers from her eyes all night. You better sleep with one eye open tonight Gabby." Hermione said in a matter of fact tone.

"I figured it would draw suspicion if I dance with Ginny." I said trying to divert another possible situation with Ron. He just looked

into his glass trying to avoid any confrontation himself.

"If she wanted Harry, she wouldn't have let him walk away from her." Gabby caused the eyes of everyone at the table to look at her. "If I was dating Harry I wouldn't let anything, including him stop me."

I did not know what to say, but it did not matter, at that moment, something large and silver came falling through the canopy over the dance floor. Graceful and gleaming, the lynx landed lightly in the middle of the astonished dancers. Heads turned, as those nearest it froze absurdly in mid-dance. Then the patronus's mouth opened wide and it spoke in the loud, deep, slow voice of Kingsley Shacklebolt.

The Ministry has fallen. Scrimgeour is dead. They are coming. The Ministry has fallen. Scrimgeour is dead. They are coming. The Ministry has fallen. Scrimgeour is dead. They are coming. The Ministry has fallen. Scrimgeour is dead. They are coming.

Everything seemed fuzzy. At first no one did anything. Everyone was watching as the cat vanished. That is until someone screamed. Guests started disapparating; the protective wards around the Burrow had fallen. Spells could be heard being shouted and streaks of light passed over our heads. Masked figures were appearing in the crowd. I jumped up and grabbed Hermione's hand while I held Gabby with my other. Ron was holding onto Hermione's close. As we all bunched together I felt Hermione turn on the spot and everything went dark. I felt the familiar squeeze as we passed through space and time, away from the Burrow and the Death Eaters, and perhaps away from Voldemort himself.

"Where are we?" Ron was the one to break the silence.

We were surrounded by people. "Tottenham Court Road," panted Hermione. "Walk, just walk, we need to find a place to change."

I noticed Gabby still holding my hand. She seemed to be freaking out a bit and I was afraid she could lose control at any moment. "How did you apparate with so many of us Hermione?"

"I don't know. I just wanted to get away from there."

"Hermione, we have no clothes to change in to." Ron had made the observation before I could.

"Maybe if I had my invisibility cloak with me we could all try to fit." I said knowing full well we couldn't fit four people completely under it.

"It's okay," said Hermione, "I have the cloak and clothes for all of us. Except for Gabrielle, I wasn't expecting her to be with us." Hermione started looking through her small bag. She pulled out the cloak and handed it to me and also pulled out some clothes for Ron to change into. "Harry, you and Gabby get under there and Ron, hurry and change." Hermione ordered.

"How" I started but Hermione cut me off.

"Undetectable Extension Charm, I have been packed and ready to go for days now. I had a feelingâ€|" Hermione drifted away in

thought.

"You're amazing Hermione." Ron said handing her his dress robes so she could pack them away.

Hidden under the invisibility cloak I asked, "What about the others?"

"We can't worry about them right now. They are after you Harry. If you show up it would cause more harm than good for them." Hermione was thinking clearly and for that I was grateful.

We ducked into an all-night cafÃ©. I slid into a booth with Gabby under the invisibility cloak. Ron and Hermione sat across from us. You would think they had a twitch the way they kept glancing over their shoulders looking at the entrance to see if we were followed.

We sat in silence until Ron said, "We could head over to the Leaky Cauldron." But Hermione quickly cut him off.

"We can't go somewhere where Harry would be recognized! Voldemort has taken over the Ministry." Gabby jumped when she heard the name.

We went back to sitting in silence. Ron and Hermione each ordered a cappuccino from the waitress. A couple burly workmen entered and sat in the booth next to us. Ron and Hermione were going over possible plans. The workmen kept waving the waitress away.

I noticed they both made a move for their wands and I pulled my own. Ron noticed something was wrong just in time to push Hermione over and dodged the spells fired from the two Death Eaters. I cast a silent Stupify under the cloak and hit the blonde Death Eater in the face. He fell back unconscious.

The other Death Eater continued casting spells toward Ron unaware of where the spell had come from that knocked down his friend. I shot another Stupify spell and missed nailing the screaming waitress. The remaining Death Eater had cast a spell to tie up Ron but was surprisingly hit by a powerful Stupify before he could do anything else. Gabby stood up with her wand in hand.

Hermione crawled out from under the bench where Ron had pushed her down. She stood up and pointed a shaky wand at the ropes that Ron was tied up in. "D-Diffindo" she yelled and Ron roared in pain as she slashed open his knee. "Oh, I'm so sorry, Ron, my hand's shaking! Diffindo!" she yelled again. This time the ropes were cut free.

"That's Dolohov," said Ron, "and that one is Rowle."

"Never mind what they are called," said a slightly hysterical Hermione. "How did they find us? What are we going to do?" Gabby was still staring at Dolohov, frozen in her own shock.

Seeing the girls panic actually cleared my head. "Lock the door, turn out the lights." I commanded. "We need to wipe their memories. If we kill them they will be suspicious. We need to throw them off our trail. Has anyone done a memory charm?" I asked knowing full well none of us had in school.

"I can," Gabby quietly spoke up. She pointed her wand at Dolohov, "Obliviate!" his eyes rolled back in his head and he got a dreamy look on his face.

"Brilliant Gabby!" I smiled at her. "Take care of the Rowle and the waitress while the rest of us clean up the restaurant."

Once the restaurant was restored we propped the two men back into their booth. "We need a place to hide," said Ron.

"Grimmauld Place," I said. Ron and Hermione both gasped.

"We can't go there, Snape can get in there." Hermione argued.

"Where else is there. Ron's dad said they put up spells to keep him out and if they did get in the Death Eaters probably searched the place months ago. It would be the last place they would look now." I said explaining my thoughts.

Having decided where to go, we turned on the lights, and woke up the two death eaters and the waitress. Before they could notice us I turned on the spot and the four of us vanished in the blink of an eye.

***AN - I hardly do author's notes but I will this time. Thanks if you have read this far. Please feel free to review for my benefit. As you have probably noticed so far things, have stayed very close to canon including me ripping things straight from the book, especially in the prologue. But that won't last much longer. Now that the story is sort of set up having Gabby with the main trio will lead to changes in the overall story. **

4. Chapter 3

When I opened my eyes we were standing in front of a familiar row of houses. I turned to Gabby "Twelve Grimmauld Place."

"What?" Gabby questioned before understanding, "uhhh, is that an address?"

Gabby realized there was an extra house on the street. I remember the familiar experience, noticing Twelve Grimmauld Place magically appear before my eyes. I ran up to the door, not bothering to answer Gabby's questions just yet. Everyone else followed me up the steps. I tapped the door with my wand; there was a series of clicks and clanks before the door swung open. The house looked just as I remembered it, dark and eerie, cobwebs hanging everywhere. The portrait of Sirius's mother was hidden behind long, dark curtains. The umbrella stand was knocked over as if Tonks had run into it.

"Welcome to my home Gabby." I whispered as I took a step forward.

Mad-Eye Moody's voice whispered from the darkness, causing us to jump. Cold air rushed over us and it felt like a tongue tying curse was cast, causing our tongues to roll up. Next a tall, dark figure rose up from the floor causing Gabby and Hermione to scream. The girl's screams woke the portrait of Mrs. Black and she joined them in

screaming. The figure pointed at me and I shouted into the room "It wasn't us, we didn't kill you." The figure exploded in a cloud of dust.

Ron was shaking badly, the girls were cowering by the door and Mrs. Black continued to scream. "Shut up!" I bellowed to Mrs. Black's portrait as I raised my wand causing the curtains to swing shut with a bang.

"What is going on?" cried Gabby. "Why does the ghost of your headmaster haunt your house?"

"That wasn't him, just a spell cast to keep his murderer out. Sorry about that Gabby." I said trying to console her.

I started to walk into the house but Hermione stop me "Wait." She raised her wand "Homenum Revelio." Nothing happened.

"That didn't do anything," said Ron not too brightly.

"It did what it was supposed to do!" said Hermione crossly. "That spell would have shown if someone else was in the house. Luckily, we are the only ones in here."

Hermione led the group to the drawing room, lighting lamps on the way. Ron looked out the window but all was clear outside the house.

A silver patronus erupted into the room and took the shape of a weasel. It spoke with the voice of Ron's father. Family safe, do not reply, we are being watched.

Ron grabbed Hermione and pulled her into a tight hug. Gabby looked at me "What is going on? What are we going to do?"

"Well, the ministry has fallen to Vol-

"Don't say that name please." squeaked Gabby.

"It is just a name." I started but gabby cut me off again.

"Please Harry." Gabby pleaded.

"Alright then, the ministry has fallen and the Dark Lord is in charge now. He must have had the wedding raided as soon as he had control to try and get me. Luckily we escaped." I explained to the group and to myself. Trying to voice out loud all that had happened helped me to better deal with it.

I continued, "I can't go into the known wizarding world or else I run the risk of being recognized. You guys should go back to the Burrow and hope no one notices."

"We already told you Harry," Hermione looked stern with me. "We are with you until the end."

"You can't get rid of us that easy. We are going to take him and his Horcruxes down together." Ron added.

"I start to think I understand and then someone says something else

and I feel lost again. What is a Horcrux?" Gabby asked.

"You should go back." I told Gabby.

"What if they catch her going back, what if they interrogate her? If they think she has been with you they will take her prisoner to try and get to you." Hermione stated.

"Please, why is he after you? Why is it so dangerous for you to go out? Tell me what is going on right now." Gabby was having a hard time keeping it together.

"We can't let her go Harry." Hermione said calmly.

"So, do I just tell her everything?" I asked Hermione.

"Yes!" Gabby yelled at me.

I looked at Gabby close. She is so pretty with her silver-blonde hair, her crystal blue eyes. She was still wearing her low-cut, gold, bridesmaid dress from the wedding. In her eyes I could see her confusion but also her conviction. She had proved to be a powerful witch the way she could do memory charms and she was quick to action when the fight started. But could I allow her to join us and put her at risk. As I weighed my options I realized I had no choice but to tell her everything and let her join. She was in danger now, no matter what I did. I may as well include her and see if she wanted to help.

"Gabby, there is a prophecy that basically says I am the only one who can stop the Dark Lord. And he knows it, so he will stop at nothing to kill me. So I'm going to kill him but in order to do so-

"Stop, what are you doing Harry!" Ron interjected. "You can't tell her any of this. What if she betrays us?"

"I promise I won't betray you Harry." Gabby was looking into my eyes and I could see she meant it.

"I trust her Ron. She is a part of this now and she deserves to know." I said to Ron. I turned back to Gabby. "So I'm going to kill him but in order to do that I have to destroy his Horcruxes first. Horcruxes are objects that he hid parts of his soul into to try and be immortal." I explained the last part knowing she wouldn't know what they are.

"So do you know where and what these Horcruxes are? Do you know how many of them there are? Do you know how to destroy them?" Gabby was rattling off questions faster than I could keep up.

"Good questions and I wish I had all the answers." I didn't know how to continue this conversation. "How about we get some sleep and we can talk more in the morning."

"I don't want to sleep alone." said Hermione.

"Neither do I." added Gabby.

"Can we sleep in the sleeping bags I brought, in here together." suggested Hermione.

"Sounds fine to me. I'm going to head to the bathroom before bed." As I made my way to the bathroom I noticed Gabby was following me. I stopped at the door and gestured for her to go first.

"I just wanted to see where the bathroom is and â€œ|" Gabby didn't finish her thought. She just stood there looking sad and afraid. She had her eyes cast down and was probably trying to keep from crying.

"It will be okay," I pulled Gabrielle into a tight hug. "I'm sure your family is fine and safe. And I won't let any harm come to you here. I know it is a scary house and all, but you are safe." I may have been trying to convince myself more than her. Gabby buried her head in my shoulder and began to quietly cry. I stood there and allowed her to cry for as long as she wanted.

I noticed Gabby was remarkably tall. I had grown tall, reaching almost 188 cm or so this summer but she must have been about 180 cm herself. I put my nose in her hair and breathed in the flowery smell from her shampoo. Something about Gabby made me want to hold her and protect her. Despite knowing she was a capable witch on her own.

Hermione walked up behind us and brought my attention back to the real world. "Sorry for interrupting, "Here are some tooth brushes and pajamas for the two of you." Hermione had her arms full and I reached out to take the offering.

"Thanks" I said as Gabby tried to wipe away her eyes. Hermione quickly made her way back to the drawing room. I looked at the clothes and realized that the pajamas Hermione gave us were really just two pairs of mine. I slept in large shirts and sweatpants when around other people and I guess Hermione figured Gabby could wear some of my extras she had packed. I handed Gabby the less holey set and let her into the bathroom first.

When Gabby came out of the bathroom she had magically tailored the clothes to be a little smaller but they still looked baggy on her. And somehow she looked just as cute as she did in her bridesmaid dress. I imagine she would look beautiful in a burlap sack.

"Your turn," she said with a small smile as she walked past me. I couldn't help but follow the sway of her hips as she walked back to the drawing room. When she vanished from my sight I snapped out of my reverie and walked into the bathroom.

As I entered the drawing room after getting ready for bed I noticed there were only three sleeping bags out. Hermione was prepared for our upcoming adventure but Gabby's presence had thrown her off.

Ron and Hermione were asleep using two of the bags in the corner; they appeared to be holding hands. Hermione had probably thrown the blankets that were on the couch, for one of us, and a third bag was lying on the floor. Gabby was sitting on the rocking chair looking into the fireplace.

I gestured to the couch, "You can take the couch and blankets. That would probably be the most comfortable."

Gabby looked up startled, "What? Oh, okay." and she went back to staring into the fireplace.

I walked over and slid into the remaining sleeping bag. I had a lot on mind but I also felt exhausted. It was probably around 3 or 4 in the morning. It didn't take me long to fall asleep.

I wasn't asleep very long when I was bumped into and woken up. I could barely open my eyes, all I could see was a cascade of silver-blonde hair falling all around me. Gabby was attempting to slide into the sleeping bag with me. "I can't sleep, hold me." she asked quietly.

I tried to make as much room as possible for her but it was very tight for the two of us. "And don't try anything." she ordered in a whisper.

We were both lying on our sides and her back was leaning into my chest. I was as still as I could manage but my heart was beating a mile a minute against her back. My arms were still at my sides as I attempted to do nothing that could upset her.

"I said hold me Harry. Put your arm around me please. I want to feel safe and secure and try to sleep." Gabby directed me with her quiet commands.

I wrapped my arm around her side and pulled her closer to me. I closed my eyes and tried to fall back asleep. It was a futile attempt and I don't know how long I laid there unsure how I had got into this situation. Eventually I heard her soft breathing, and I could tell she had fallen asleep. I began to relax and finally, I fell back asleep.

5. Chapter 4

I woke up alone in my bag, slightly glad and slightly sad about that. It would have been nice to wake up with Gabby pressed against me but at least I didn't need to try and explain something like my wand poking her in the back. I started making my way to the old creaky stairs. Slowly making my way up each floor, not sure what I was looking for.

I heard music coming from one of the upstairs rooms. It was a pretty song that I do not know. The sound grew louder the closer I got. I pushed the door open and slowly walked into the room. Gabby had her back to the door, sitting at a baby grand piano. It was mesmerizing the way she could play. I quietly walked near and stopped beside her.

Gabrielle jumped when she noticed me, "Oh, you scared me."

"I'm sorry to frighten you." I apologized.

"It's alright, I'm sorry if I woke you. I was hoping no one could hear me up here." Gabby explained her thoughts to me. "Playing can be very relaxing and I couldn't sleep any longer."

"We can't hear you downstairs. I only heard when I started wandering around the house after I woke." I said. "Please continue, "You play

the piano lovely."

"I'm really not that good. My mother taught me, you should see her play. She is magnificent." Gabby said humbly.

"Well, my ears think you play wonderfully. Please continue; I would love to hear more. Maybe you can relax me as well."

I stood near Gabby as she resumed playing. I took a chance to look around the room as I took in the relaxing music. I had never been in this room before. Most of the spare bedrooms were on the other floors. This appeared to be an upstairs parlor for the women of the house. There were several chairs for sitting in and the piano was nestled in a nook with bay windows. Where you could look out and enjoy the scenery while you played the piano. I could imagine a bunch of women in here a hundred years ago playing the piano and sewing or just having a little fun hiding away from the men of the house.

Our relaxation was cut short when Hermione came running into the room. "There you two are." She turned to the door and yelled downstairs, "I found them Ron."

"We came up here when we woke up. Sorry if we woke you." Gabby was as polite as always.

"You didn't wake us." Hermione reassured Gabby. "We were just worried when we woke up and you both were missing."

"We should go downstairs and get some breakfast." I suggested. Gabby stood and we all made our way downstairs. On my way downstairs I noticed a door labelled Regulus Arcturus Black. That must be Sirius's brother's room. Something stood out to me about it.

"Hey Hermione," I called to the bushy haired witch walking down the stairs. "Regulus Arcturus Black, you don't think that could be the R.A.B. from the locket do you? He was a Death Eater."

"If he was a Death Eater; and if he became disenchanted with Vol—" Hermione started but a small shriek from Gabby stopped her. Hermione continued, "If he became disenchanted with the Dark Lord he could have had the knowledge and desire to try and bring him down."

I reached for the door handle. It was locked but with a flick of my wand the lock clicked and I was able to enter followed by Gabby, Hermione and Ron. "You think he stole it and brought it here?" I said out loud to the room in general.

"Possibly," Hermione was starting to go through the contents of the nearest dresser.

I made my way to the night stand, looking around the room trying to catch a peek of a gold locket. The room looked how I imagine Draco's room would look. Green everywhere, Slytherin colors and symbols on everything. There was old newspaper clippings from Voldemort's first reign of terror scattered around the room. There was a picture of Regulus as a member of the Slytherin quidditch team.

"What are we looking for?" Gabby asked bringing my attention back to the task on hand.

"Salazar Slytherin's gold locket, I believe the Dark Lord made it into one of his Horcruxes. Professor Dumbledore and I found where he had hidden it but someone with the initials R.A.B had found it first. And this may be the room of that R.A.B." I explained.

"We are never going to find it. How do we know this is even the correct R.A.B.?" Ron groaned after fifteen minutes of looking around the room.

I came out of the closet I had been looking in and raised my wand, "Accio locket." Nothing happened. I should have known that an object like the locket wouldn't be something you could just summon. "Maybe he destroyed it and we don't need to worry about it? I wish Sirius was here, maybe he would know about it."

"Can we take a break, I still haven't eaten breakfast." Ron acted like a wounded baby holding his stomach.

"Wait, I remember seeing a locket when we were cleaning the place up for the Order but I think Sirius threw it in the bin." Trust Hermione to remember everything.

"If it got dumped, then what?" Ron questioned, "Unless Kreacher nicked it like he did all that other junk."

"Kreacher!" I yelled into the room. There was a loud crack and before I knew it the tiny, wrinkly skinned, white haired elf was standing before me.

Kreacher gave me a loathsome look, "Master back in my Mistress old house. Bringing blood-traitor Weasley, the Mudblood and a half-breed."

"I forbid you to call anyone Mudblood, blood-traitor or half-breed." Kreacher shut up but he didn't look any happier. Of course, I was probably frowning at him more than he was at me. I still haven't forgiven him for betraying Sirius to Voldemort.

"Kreacher, I am going to ask you some questions and I command you to answer truthfully." He grimaced but nodded. "The locket Sirius threw away in the trash, did you take it into your possession?"

"Yes." Hermione almost jumped in joy when Kreacher admitted to having taken it.

"Where is it now?" I followed up.

"Gone."

"Gone where?"

"Mundungus Fletcher stole it all!" Kreacher broke out into sobs. His sobs were rapidly starting to turn into screams. He made to go to the door, to try and smash himself, but I jumped him and grabbed him before he could harm himself. "Master Regulus's locket!" Kreacher continued to scream.

"Kreacher tell me everything you know about that locket." I commanded.

Kreacher started to explain all about how Regulus had volunteered Kreacher to go with Voldemort to hide the locket. How Kreacher returned weakened from drinking the potion to Regulus. How Regulus was upset, and returned with Kreacher. How they switched Voldemort's locket with the fake. How Regulus commanded Kreacher to destroy the locket before he was pulled into the lake. Telling the story had taken a lot out of the poor elf. I felt sick just watching him relive his worst nightmare.

"I couldn't destroy it." Kreacher was still crying. Hermione and Gabby had tears of their own streaming down their faces.

"Kreacher, listen to me. I want you to find Mundungus Fletcher and the locket. We are going to finish what Master Regulus started and we are going to destroy it." I pulled the fake locket out of my pocket and handed it to Kreacher. "And I want you to have this. I think that is what Regulus would want."

"Overkill, mate," said Ron. I ignored Ron and waited for Kreacher's response.

Kreacher looked happy and proud to have the chance to honor his previous and current Masters. He made a low bow to me and disapparated with his usual loud crack.

We made our way downstairs and checked the cupboard for food. Luckily Kreacher still kept the place stocked well enough. I grabbed bacon, eggs and some bread and set off making breakfast for the four of us.

Gabby walked up behind me, while I was cooking at the stove. "You cook like a muggle."

"What, oh yeah. I guess it is just the way I learned. I'm used to cooking for my aunt, uncle and cousin." I said.

"Do you miss them?"

"No, definitely not. They treated me like garbage and I plan on never seeing them again. And please don't ask any follow up questions, it's a sore subject for me."

Gabby didn't say anything. She responded by gently rubbing her hands over my back as I cooked. It was nice, I hadn't realized how tight I was until she started.

"Finally," Ron said as I brought the food to the table.

"Ron! Gratitude!" Hermione chastised him. "Thank you Harry for cooking breakfast."

We all ate in relative silence. As we all began to finish Gabby started the conversation back up "So the locket is a Horcrux?" I nodded.

"How many are there?"

"Vol."

"Shhh, stop trying to say that." Gabby chided me.

"You-Know-Who wanted seven." I started over. "Two of them, the ring of Salazar Slytherin and the diary Tom Riddle; that is You-Know-Who's real name, have been destroyed. There is the locket that we sent Kreacher to get. We believe one to be the cup of Helga Hufflepuff and another to be his pet snake Nagini. We assume another is either an item of Gryffindor or an item of Ravenclaw. Tom is obsessed with the Founders of Hogwarts."

"That only makes six. And where are the Horcruxes that aren't destroyed, or tracked by Kreacher?" Gabby pressed on.

"This is where it gets tricky. He may have made six and counted his personal body as a seventh. Maybe he has an item of Ravenclaw and Gryffindor to make seven. I don't know. As for where are they hidden, I am at a loss. He likes to hide them in significant spots in his past. Places he feels connected to, or places he feels have power. So I would guess he would likely have one hidden in Hogwarts and probably one in Gringotts as well. The snake stays close to him and Dung has the locket as mentioned before." I believe I got everything out that I had in my thoughts.

"So snake and locket, you know where they are. The Hufflepuff cup and an item of Gryffindor and/or Ravenclaw are most likely in Gringotts and Hogwarts respectively. So how will we destroy them once we get ahold of them?" Gabby was good at following along and actually saying things in a manner that made it clearer in my own mind.

"Dumbledore didn't explain that part." I frowned. "I destroyed the diary with basilisk venom, besides that I don't have a clue how?"

"Okay then, let's work through what we need to do." Gabby seemed to be a machine at processing info. "We need to figure out how to destroy them. Where can we get the knowledge?"

"No idea."

"What items are famous that belonged to Gryffindor or Ravenclaw?"

"The Sword of Gryffindor but that can't be cursed because Dumbledore has had it and there is the lost Diadem of Ravenclaw." Hermione chimed in.

"So, let's assume Tom found the diadem. Where would he hide an item in Hogwarts?" Gabby continued to learn and now she was trying to move us along on our quest.

"Chamber of Secrets?" I shrugged. "Only place he would know of that Dumbledore never could get into. If we get into the chamber we could get some basilisk fangs that were left there and hope the venom is still good."

"Alright, and where in Gringotts would he hide one?"

"Why do I feel so stupid compared to you three? I am so lost." Ron got up to leave but Hermione grabbed his hand and held him close.

"We all are working together Ron. We are in this together." she reassured him.

"He would want it in a prestigious vault." I said returning the conversation to Gabby and her questions.

"Who has a vault like that, that Tom would trust?" Gabby continued to ask why. She would make a great reporter or private investigator someday.

"Malfoy, LeStrange, I don't know. I don't know all the Death Eaters and who he trusts most and who has a prestigious vault or what makes a prestigious vault besides the amount of money in it and security around it." I was stumped. The more we thought about this the stupider and more unprepared I felt.

"Probably not Malfoy, he was already given one Horcrux, the diary, and he let that one get destroyed." Hermione added.

Gabby smiled despite how difficult this all sounded, "We are going to learn how to destroy these things and if we can't figure out a way we will try the basilisk venom. Kreacher will come back with the locket. We will plan a trip to investigate Hogwarts. We will spy on the Death Eaters and see who would have the vault and trust of Tom's. And we are going to break into Gringotts to steal it when we know."

It felt good to have her say everything like it was actual plan of action we could follow. But the daunting reality of everything made me feel overwhelmingly hopeless.

End
file.